

George in honor of its finder, is on exhibit in one of the indoor tanks in the Aquarium.

George is at the moment on a liquid diet, but will shortly graduate—we hope—to eating fish. But no pennies, please! They don't agree with seals.

SAN DIEGO SOCIETY CELEBRATES ANNIVERSARY

ON OCTOBER 9 the San Diego Society of Natural History will celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of its founding. The occasion will be featured by special exhibits, and a brochure descriptive of the society and its work.

The California Academy of Sciences congratulates a sister society on three-quarters of a century of distinguished achievement in the promotion of science.

APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

NOTICE is hereby given to all Corporate Members that the Council at its September meeting approved the applications of Mr. F. E. Blair, Mr. T. Hannon, Mr. Claude R. Langford, Miss Lesley McDonald, Mr. Robert Y. Pratt, Miss Ellen A. Sanders, Mr. Allen B. Sherman, and Mr. Carl B. Wahlund for REGULAR MEMBERSHIP, and of Thelma Arlom, Margaret L. Armstrong, Lois Cantwell, Jean Clay, Jeanne Davis, Paul Hanes, Michael Issel, David Jacobson, David Kitchen, Edgar Lehmann, Robert Montgomery, Heidi Peery, Dee Ann Wattenburger, and Peter Werre for STUDENT MEMBERSHIP in the California Academy of Sciences. If no objection to the election of these applicants be received at the office of the Academy within two weeks after September 21, they will be considered elected.

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Photograph by courtesy of U. S. Coast Guard

SOUTH FARALLON

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September Announcement

THE REGULAR SEPTEMBER MEETING of the California Academy of Sciences will be held in North American Hall, West Wing of the Academy buildings in Golden Gate Park, on Wednesday evening, September 28, 1949, at 8 o'clock. Mr. Allyn G. Smith will present an illustrated lecture entitled

REDISCOVERING THE FARALLONES

Twenty miles to the west of the Golden Gate lies a group of small, steep, rocky isles which the early Spanish explorers called "farallones," meaning simply rocks or cliffs. Subsequently Sir Francis Drake, who landed there in 1759 to obtain a supply of seal meat, named them the Islands of St. James, but in 1775 Juan Francisco de Bodega y Cuadra renamed them Farallones de los Frayles, or "cliffs of the friars." This became shortened by usage to "Farallones," then modified to Farallon Islands, the official name today.

The islands were once a rookery for fur seals, which were hunted to extinction. They also constitute the nesting grounds of myriads of sea birds, and for many years egg hunters carried on a lively business supplying the San Francisco market, until this was prohibited by law. The islands now constitute a lighthouse preserve and bird sanctuary.

Notwithstanding their background of history, and their proximity to a large center of population, the Farallones have remained very incompletely known from a scientific standpoint. Strange as it may seem, the geological literature does not even contain a description of the rocks of which they are composed.

In May of the present year, through the courtesy of the United States Coast Guard, Dr. G. Dallas Hanna, Curator of the Academy's Department of Paleontology, and Mr. Smith, Research Associate in the same department, spent a week on the Farallones, investigating the geology and biology of the area.

Mr. Smith will give a general account of the natural history of the islands, illustrated with photographs taken on this expedition.

The public is cordially invited.

ACADEMY JOINS NAVY IN PROBING SEA BOTTOM

UNDER A CONTRACT recently signed with the Office of Naval Research, the Academy will undertake a combined geological and biological investigation of the sea bottom off the central California coast. The objectives of the project are to determine the geological character of the continental shelf and of certain adjacent sea mounts which rise from considerable depths to the west of the continental shelf; to determine the occurrence and distribution of undersea life in relation to such factors as temperature, depth and character of the bottom; and to interpret the effect of bottom contours upon local currents and the upwelling of water from the ocean depths.

The work at sea will be done with Navy vessels, the Academy providing scientific staff and direction.

On a "shakedown" cruise August 22-26 aboard the *U.S.S. Mulberry*, samples of rock were obtained from the bottom in depths down to 600 feet. Samples of bottom sediments and of bottom-dwelling organisms were obtained from somewhat greater depths.

AQUARIUM, HAVING LOST OSCAR, SEALS PACT WITH GEORGE

OSCAR, YOU WILL REMEMBER, was the lovable little leopard seal that disported himself in the pool in front of the Aquarium a few years back. He had one of the nicest sealskin coats in western North America; but there was one thing the matter with it—no pockets!

Tailored for a strictly credit business, Oscar preferred cash. And scores of misguided admirers used to toss him pennies, nickels and dimes. With no pockets and no cash register, the only place he could put the stuff was in his mouth. Here, even with tongue in cheek, he could carry only a limited cash balance, so the surplus was transferred to his stomach. When the surplus reached \$5.17 and a weight of four pounds, Oscar was sunk—one of those paradoxical cases of a business going under by reason of too large a cash reserve.

Ever since Oscar's lamented passing, the Aquarium has been looking for a successor. Leopard seals are common enough, but not too easily come by. Occasionally an adult is caught by accident in a fisherman's net, but adults are hard to handle and never become very tame. Sometimes pups that have become lost from their mothers are found along the beach; these are easy to tame but difficult to rear.

Recently Mr. George Rodriguez of San Francisco, a member of the crew of the Standard Oil tanker *J. L. Hanna*, obtained a young leopard seal in Vancouver Harbor. An air-mail letter and a radiogram brought a receiving line of aquarium personnel to meet the *Hanna* when it docked in Richmond. Now the young seal, named